

Endion Passenger Depot
1504 South Street
Duluth
St. Louis County
Minnesota

HAER No. MN-9

HAER
MINN,
69-DULU,
6-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Engineering Record
Rocky Mountain Regional Office
National Park Service
U. S. Department of the Interior
P. O. Box 25287
Denver, Colorado 80225

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

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Endion Passenger Depot

Location: 1504 South Street at 15th Avenue East in Duluth,
St. Louis County, Minnesota

UTM: Latitude: 46° 47' 59"
Longitude: 92° 04' 36"
Quad: Duluth, Minnesota

Date of Construction: 1899

Builder/Designer: Designer: Firm of Tenbusch and Hill (Gearhard A.
Tenbusch and I. Vernon Hill) of Duluth,
Minnesota
Builder: David Hood

Present Owner: Minnesota Department of Transportation
St. Paul, Minnesota

Present Occupant: Vacant

Significance: The Endion Depot is significant as the last of the
small passenger depots to function in Duluth. Its
jewel-like character results from the fine use of
stone and brick architectural detailing and
craftsmanship. Further, it stands as an excellent
example of I. Vernon Hill's early design and as a
building which contributed to the development of
Hill's distinctive impact on Duluth architecture in
the early twentieth century.

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Minnesota Department of Transportation
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Edited, Retyped
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Historical Information

The city of Duluth, in its growth and expansion, absorbed several small communities that were individual entities in the early days at the head of the lake. One of these early settlements was the town of Endion (Endion is a Chippewa Indian name meaning "my", "yours", or "his home".) It was originally platted by surveyor Elias Martin and filed on record on December 5, 1856. A portion of the town was subdivided and purchased by various owners in November 1870; the original private owner of lots 1 and 2 being William Branch, a prominent business at that time. Through sales and title transfers, the fledgling railroad known as the Duluth and Iron Range (D&IR) acquired the ownership to lot 1 in May 1886, and lot 2 in August 1886.

The railroad company laid track and began servicing the communities of North Shore and Two Harbors in late 1886. One of the stops along the route was the town of Endion (now part of the city of Duluth), which was the first stop outside of downtown Duluth. This railroad service performed an important role in the development of the city's east end neighborhoods. To satisfy the passenger and freight needs of Endion, the railroad decided in 1899 to construct a passenger depot with an attached freight shed. They commissioned the newly-formed firm of Tenbusch and Hill of Duluth to design it. The depot, built of Kettle River sandstone and pressed brick, was executed in a variant on the Romanesque style. The basic concept of projecting gables, which crossed in a transept fashion, had been used by other designers of the later nineteenth century, but was developed by Hill into a highly aggressive and personal style which marked his major works in Duluth between 1901 and 1903. The design was the first of these major works in the development of Hill's architectural career.

The building was constructed by David Hood at a cost of approximately \$10,000, and it was put into service at the turn of the century.

At this time in Duluth's history, railroads proliferated throughout the region to serve the expanding industries and communities of northeastern Minnesota. Among these was the Duluth, Missabe and Northern (DM&N) Railroad, serving the lumbering and iron ore industries. Consolidation of the DM&N and the D&IR railroad companies was under consideration for several years, and a lease-merger arrangement was finally worked out and fulfilled on January 10, 1930. At the time of the merger, the name for the new company resulted from the combination of names of the two former railroads. This was the birth of the Duluth, Missabe and Iron Range Railroad Company (DM&IR). The ownership of the depot was transferred to the new company with the merger.

When rail passenger travel was at its peak, six trains arrived and departed daily from Endion depot and four offered cafe-parlor service. Regularly scheduled passenger service on the Missabe ended with the departure of train No. 6 from Endion on July 15, 1961. The building was used for freight until 1978, when it was closed.

Due to its architectural style, the renowned designers of the building, and its ties to early Minnesota rail transportation, the Endion Passenger Depot was nominated to the National Register of Historic Places. After review by the appropriate authorities, the nomination of the building was accepted, and it was entered onto the National Register on April 16, 1975.

The DM&IR petitioned the Minnesota Department of Transportation to retire the depot building from railroad use in 1977 because business at the station had declined to a point that was uneconomical. Following a hearing, the petition was granted and the building closed in March 1978.

On January 17, 1983, the DM&IR Railroad Company sold the Endion Depot to Edward Schafer Associates, Inc., a Duluth architectural firm, for use as their office. After reviewing Schafer's proposal for the use of the depot as offices, Charles Nelson, a historical architect for the Minnesota Historical Society, wrote, "I am impressed with your proposal as being extremely sensitive to the historic character of the depot," and concluded, "the Endion Depot will remain the jewel which architects Tenbusch and Hill intended it to be."

The Minnesota Department of Transportation purchased the depot and its site (northerly 35 feet of Lots 1, 2 and 3, Block 14, Endion Division) from Edward Schafer Associates, Inc., on September 27, 1985, with the land to be used for right-of-way for Interstate Highway 35.

Architectural Information

The depot is a small building, measuring only 70 feet by 24 feet. The highest point at the central gable rises nearly 37 feet above ground level. The foundation and stone trim are of locally quarried Kettle River sandstone of buff color, which contrasts with the pressed red brick body of the building. All coping and door and window surrounds are of Kettle River sandstone. Essentially, the building forms a cruciform plan at the roof due to the intersection of gables, although it is basically rectangular in floor plan. A central stone bay, which housed the station master's office, projects on the east front of the building. Originally, it had been roofed in Bangor slate, but this roofing has been replaced with brown asphalt shingle roofing. Original metal ridges and caps were not retained. A frame freight (LCL) shed, formerly attached to the northeast facade, was removed during the summer of 1974 due to its dilapidated condition.

Stylistically, the depot may be reclassified as a mode of the Richardsonian style that was popular during the 1880s and 1890s. The rusticated stonework, in contrast to the flat surface of the brick, stone window surrounds and the conception of projecting gables capped with stone, is essentially Romanesque, although the smallness of scale contributes to the lighter, more delicate appearance rather than the heaviness of the earlier Romanesque.

The interior of the depot originally consisted of two areas: a passenger waiting room with rest room facilities and the station master's office, which was partitioned to also include a vault and a trainmen's waiting room.

After Edward Schafer purchased the depot, he carefully repaired, restored and remodeled the building with concern for its character. The first floor was altered slightly by construction of partitions to provide a reception area, a conference room, offices and drafting area. Schafer had the original woodwork and wainscoting stripped of the varnish and salvaged as much as he could to decorate the offices as they once were. Windows were replaced with energy-efficient, triple-glazed windows, and because they were of the same type of double-hung windows with bronze trim, the original appearance was retained. The exterior was cleaned by a specialist approved by the historical society and new mortar was applied. On the east end of the building, where a long warehouse was once attached, Schafer built an extension which complements the west end of the building with the same style hip roof and bay window.

Bibliography

Final Interstate Highway 35 Section 4(f) Statement and Historic and Cultural Preservation Report, October 1977

National Register of Historic Places Inventory-Nomination Form, December 1974

Missabe Iron Ranger, Spring 1980

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